

LIAISON SCHOOLS AND CLASSES
FOR THE BLIND REPORT

October 6-7, 1955

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

LIAISON

SCHOOLS AND CLASSES FOR THE BLIND

REPORT

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LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

INTRODUCTORY MEETING
OCTOBER 6 & 7, 1955

MAR 21 1972

THE AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND
1839 Frankfort Avenue
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

I N T R O D U C T I O N

This report summarizes the first meeting of liaison representatives of schools for the blind working with the Department of Educational Research of the American Printing House. It is condensed and summarized from a tape-recorded record of the meeting. It reflects limitations upon the effort to communicate in writing the flavor and spirit of an interested and enthusiastic group working together. However, it attempts fairly to represent the factual content of the meeting and the essence of contributions of the participants.

It is our hope that participation in this program will be broadened in the future to include representatives from all of the schools and classes served by the Printing House.

Should questions of any nature be raised in the mind of the reader, he is encouraged to inquire about them further from:

Samuel C. Ashcroft
Director of Educational Research
American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky

The need has long been felt for the development of a Liaison program to implement research activities and to secure a closer working relationship between the Printing House Department of Educational Research and the schools and classes served. This need and the Liaison idea was presented to school superintendents in a letter in the late spring of 1955. The letters were written to the superintendents of the forty-eight residential schools for the blind that seemed likely to be in a position to participate. They were asked to designate one person on their staff who would assume responsibilities in a program to implement research efforts of the Printing House and cooperative efforts of the schools participating. The meeting of October 6, 7, and 8 was planned to initiate this program and to lay plans for a year's work. Thirty-one schools responded, seventeen with appointments and a commitment to send a representative; twelve with appointments but without commitment to send their designate. Two schools responded that did not name a specific appointee and seventeen were not heard from. The following list of representatives and consultants attended the meeting.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>AGENCY</u>
Georgie Lee Abel	Consultant in Education	American Foundation for the Blind
Pauline Alexander	Psychologist	Ohio School
Sam Ashcroft	Director, Department of Educational Research	American Printing House for the Blind
Seldon Brannon	Principal	West Virginia School
F.E. Davis	Superintendent	American Printing House for the Blind
Betty Duncan	Assistant, Braille and Large Type Editor	American Printing for the Blind
L.M. Dunn	Coordinator of Special Education	Peabody College for Teachers
Doris Ethington	Research Assistant	University of Kentucky
Floyd E. Farrar	Principal	Tennessee School

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Norman Griggs	Principal	Virginia School
Jack Hartong	Principal	Illinois School
Julia Hayes	Principal	Connecticut School
Majorie Hooper	Braille and Large Type Editor	American Printing House for the Blind
L.P. Howser	Principal	Kentucky School
Burward Hutchinson	Principal	Iowa School
Lee Iverson	Principal	Florida School
Charles Kaufman	Principal	Colorado School
P.J. Langan	Superintendent	Kentucky School
Robert McQuie	Teacher and Psychome- trist	Missouri School
Ernest Meyers	Professor of Psychology	University of Kentucky
Robert Moscole	Principal	Indiana School
Corinne Nance	Commercial Teacher	Texas School
Elizabeth Oberly	Principal	Western Pennsyl- vania School
Nathaniel Raskin	Director of Research Planning	American Foundation for the Blind
Ben Smith	Principal	Perkins School
Everett Wilcox	Principal	Oregon School
June Woodward	Elementary Department	Alabama School
Virgil Zickel	Plant Manager	American Printing House for the Blind

The attached program was sent out as the tentative program for the meeting. It was designated as tentative so that participants in the conference might have a share in the planning. The account of the meeting which follows indicates that this tentative program was largely replaced by group planning and gives a brief account of that planning as it took place.

The consultants met in a pre-planning session Wednesday Evening, October 5. They were joined by those participants who arrived early for the meeting. At this time, it was decided that rather than to follow the tentative program, it would be more meaningful to have the program center in the needs and problems that might be stated by those attending. It was suggested that out of their statements of problems might grow an appropriate program that would cover the majority of items listed in the tentative program. This account of the meeting and reference to the tentative program indicates the extent to which this became true.

The initial session was opened with brief welcomes by Mr. F. E. Davis, Superintendent of The American Printing House for the Blind, and Mr. P. J. Langan, Superintendent of the Kentucky School for the Blind.

After the welcomes and opening remarks, the whole group was solicited for pre-planning suggestions by the following five questions:

1. Are there items on the tentative program that raise questions in your minds?

Example: Why is this in the program?

What purpose will it serve?
2. What revisions, deletions, or additions would you suggest?
3. How does the tentative time allotment strike you?
4. What personal, professional, or organizational interests would you like indulged in the program?
5. How can the probable interest in a Printing House tour best be handled in terms of our time schedule?

As a result of this brief preplanning session it was decided to include tours through the Printing House and the Kentucky School. It was agreed, as had been suggested in the earlier preplanning session,

that it would be desirable, rather than to follow the tentative program, to let consideration of the topics named there grow out of statement and discussion of problems raised by members of the group. With these preliminaries, the meeting was under way.

In orienting the group to the purpose of the meeting, the history of the Department of Educational Research was briefly sketched. The department was shown to have grown out of the interests of superintendents of schools, who are ex-officio members of the Board of Trustees. Other, less centralized efforts to promote research have been hampered by lack of continuity in voluntary efforts, difficulty of communication among widely dispersed committee members, and lack of subsidy. The long time need and desire for a specific facility for central planning and execution of research projects culminated in the establishment of this department as a Printing House function.

In sketching a background for the meeting, educational research was defined as "study and investigation in the field of education or bearing on educational problems." Research itself was described as meaning "intensive searching through studious inquiry or experimentation and revision of accepted conclusions or practices in the light of new information."

With this introduction, it was suggested that liaison persons could function in ways that could be summarized under four types of activity; Identification, Communication, Implementation, and Evaluation. Liaison persons could be effectively helpful in the identification of problems which are felt to be amenable to solution through research efforts. Being in close touch with problems as they arise in the educative process,

they are in an excellent position to evaluate the importance of problems that need study. Liaison persons could operate to develop effective communication among the schools and between the schools and the Printing House. When research is undertaken, when data are to be interpreted, or when findings are to be made known, the liaison person would be in an excellent position to assure optimum flow of accurate information. The person in the liaison capacity could function to coordinate activities necessary in the carrying out of the research efforts. Though he might not himself be responsible for every or even any other phase of the research activity he could assume responsibility for integration of the activities of those who are participating. Liaison activity will be of great importance when efforts are made to put into effect research findings that have a bearing on school practices. Constant evaluation and re-evaluation is a necessary aspect of a developmental program as is research in this setting. The liaison person would be in an excellent position to participate in continued evaluation of every aspect of the program.

The liaison person then is not expected necessarily to do research, although certainly he sometimes may and should, but rather to expedite and integrate research activity through identifying problems, stimulating communication, expediting implementation, and encouraging evaluation.

The need for liaison grows out of the difficulty of direct communication with school personnel most closely associated with educational problems. It springs from a reluctance to identify meaningful problems without direct contact with problems. The need is emphasized by the importance of providing opportunity for broad participation and the development of feelings of responsibility for a program that may effect

the schools to be served.

It is pointed out that the liaison program is a trial, in many ways a critical trial, for the success of the department under its present direction depends upon shared responsibility and cooperative effort. Success for this department will be defined as initiating and implementing meaningful, wanted and needed research, but research soundly oriented in theory.

Dr. Dunn, the keynote speaker, followed this introductory statement. He outlined some research techniques considered appropriate for the study of educational problems. He illustrated the techniques with concrete examples of research on the blind, research on other types of exceptional children, and with examples of research that could be undertaken.

Dr. Dunn listed: The Methods of Normative-Survey Research

1. By questionnaire (limitations were pointed out)
2. By Survey Testing
3. By interview
4. By observation and/or time sampling
5. By rating scales

The Method of Historical Research

The Method of Action Research

Evaluating with care what is being done as practices are actually carried out.

The Method of Experimental Research

Identifying problems

Developing hypotheses

Experimenting

Generalizing from experimentation

Dr. Dunn raised a number of questions that would lend themselves to experimentation,

- a. What would be the effect on reading readiness of planning a study for development of braille reading readiness?
- b. What are the essential differences between good and poor braille readers?
- c. Is the dot system the best medium for reading for the blind?
- d. How can manual skills best be taught?
- e. What are the psychological and educational effects on public high school class placement of blind children?

In order to follow the recommendation concerning the problem centered approach suggested in pre-planning, the question arose as to whether to break up into small groups to name problems or to remain as one group for this purpose. A decision was made to have everyone meet together first to compile a list of problems, next to divide into smaller groups for discussion of these and additional problems and then all to meet together again to discuss the reports.

It was anticipated that from the total meeting would come one or more problems to be used as a pilot project about which the liaison program could develop during the year. There were to be no restrictions as to the type of problems to be considered, visual status of children, methods of finding answers, or time allotment on the type of problems chosen.

The following problems were suggested for study:

1. Could the Printing House develop parallel large type achievement tests for the simultaneous achievement testing of all the students? Could the color in ink-print materials for the primary grades be included in such materials when put in large print at the Printing House? Could more readiness materials for all types of school work be

made available?

2. What is braille readability? Could a method of measuring braille readability be developed? What is the grade-level of readability after a book has been transcribed?

3. Using the sociometric research approach suggested by Dr. Dunn, would it be possible to determine how effectively integrated visually handicapped children are when placed in mixed classes of sighted and visually handicapped children from the preschool level through the high school level, especially in the public school classes?

4. What makes a leader in a residential school? What are the factors that contribute to students' designation of leaders in schools and classes for the blind?

5. What are our significant curriculum problems? Should the curricula be patterned after public schools? What are the characteristics of the necessary plus curriculum? What, over and above, the regular curriculum, should be emphasized?

6. What curriculum modifications should be made for the multiple handicapped, particularly for the slow learners and those who are mentally retarded?

7. How well are our graduates prepared to face life? What experiences are needed in their preparation? Would it be possible to do a follow-up study of graduates for this purpose? Could an action research approach help determine a better method of preparation for students in life and after school?

8. In schools of small staffs and few electives, is too much emphasis being placed on college preparation with minimum consideration

for the larger percentage of the class whose formal education terminates with high school or before?

9. How can instruction be more individualized in small schools?

10. Would a study of drop-outs, terminees, and graduates help us to improve our curricula?

11. What kind of program could be developed in social and vocational guidance and where should it be placed in the grades?

Using this list of problems, suggestions, and with the commission to develop statements of additional problems, the group divided into three smaller groups with consultant and resource personnel distributed among them.

SUMMARY OF THREE GROUP REPORTS.

The small groups felt that the follow-up study should involve 'terminees', a term including graduates, drop-outs, and failures. Such a study would have implications for the larger problem, the aim of which would be to throw valuable light on curriculum development.

Materials for vocational and social guidance would be of help in the 'terminees' problem. It was suggested that the American Printing House Department of Educational Research could contribute by doing research on such materials and making them available. The problem of developing a program of vocational and social guidance and the grade placement of the program should be studied.

A related problem is that of working with rehabilitation agencies. The necessity of developing a closer, better working relationship with agencies who take over with our graduates and 'terminees' is felt.

The methods of teaching travel, the time element involved and the

ways of including young children in such a program, constitutes an important problem for study.

A definite problem is seen in curriculum development. What are the 'plus factors' in our curricula? What, in addition to the state-required course of study should be included in our curricula? Are there areas in which young blind children can be helped to adjust to their handicaps that should be emphasized to a greater extent than subject-matter mastery? Are there implications in the way young deaf children are educated for our primary programs, developing compensatory skills before emphasizing subject matter?

The small group reports summarized above were made to the group assembled and a short time was spent discussing the reports as a whole group. This discussion ended on the question, "Are these not administrative problems largely? What about problems teachers face from day to day?" At a later session, this question was presented again stimulating the following discussion:

What makes a child ready for the first grade? Below are ways in which pre-first grade students are being prepared:

1. The Virginia School has pre-primary and primary years before the first grade. The principal believes, however, it is difficult to assess readiness even after this preliminary program.

2. Western Pennsylvania has worked with starting children at the age of four, thus giving them three years of preparation.

3. Oregon accepts children at a minimum age and shows no grade distinction up to junior high. This plan has the advantages of minimizing stigma on non-average children, minimizing departmentalization; providing for individualized instruction; and emphasizing readiness over groupness.

The chief difficulty is in securing approval and acceptance from pupils, parents, the public, and teachers.

No conclusion was reached at this time as to the method of attacking readiness problems.

The discussion turned to a consideration of cumulative records.

The suggestion was made that it might be very useful to study reporting procedures and let study of cumulative records be a part of this. With training and help, all teachers should make use of cumulative records. The staff should be brought up to date on children. This information should be obtained from the pre-school institute and former teachers. In this, there is a problem of finding time for recording information in cumulative records. The question of frequency of reporting arose, and suggestions were made concerning this. The need was expressed for some universal minimum form of cumulative record. Due to the fact that 40% of the teachers are blind it was suggested that it might be advisable that the Printing House print cumulative record folders for braille and ink-print. Records were discussed and the different ways of keeping them were mentioned. For example, Virginia has a three part record: academic, social-adjustment, and medical. In discussing records, the problem of teacher readiness to handle cumulative record materials arose.

Due to the differences in the schools, it was suggested that records should be made with minimum standards in mind, thus allowing useful variations, as agreed upon by a working committee. Perhaps this could all be started by the Department of Educational Research sending a questionnaire on cumulative records. The liaison committee could contribute by helping to create interest in this project in their schools.

Attention was called to "Action Research" and "Encyclopedia of Educational Research", as two books that might be helpful to Liaison persons.

The forming of committee which would give thought and consideration as to what it is we are trying to teach, could implement interest expressed in curriculum. The possibility of running into difficulty with state regulations and NEA philosophies and the necessity of concentrating on what is being done over and above state requirements was mentioned. Would a starting point be to do the follow-up study that has previously been discussed? Perhaps a list of graduates of a year ago could be obtained from the schools, a questionnaire made up in braille, sent out to each person and then an evaluation be made of the results. The feelings were that this would be a biased sample, including the graduates when actually the interest should be in the terminces. However, there was almost a unanimous agreement to try some type of follow-up study as a lead into the problem of curriculum evaluation, revision, and development.

In connection with identifying graduates and terminces for a follow-up study, mention was made that the American Annals of the Deaf devotes its January issue to an enumeration of basic data on the breakdown of students, teachers, services, etc. Perhaps such a periodical could be developed to help with the blind.

In the follow-up study there is a need for getting at the strengths and weaknesses of the existing program, perhaps having a master plan. There is a need to know what we have on a national level before an evaluation can be made from this type of study. Cooperating agencies could help as well as the students. A manageable way to approach the study of curriculum might be to break it down into different areas and

have a committee working in each area. It would be important to let the State Departments know what is important for blind children. It was suggested that there is less necessity to know what is wrong than there is to do something about what is already known to be wrong.

Dr. Raskin discussed current research at the American Foundation. He spoke of the following studies:

1. A study of the past year by Dr. Eisenstadt, is similar to Brieland's in the attempt to compare blind children's speech with that of sighted children. Dr. Eisenstadt was careful in getting matched, representative samples and objective evaluation and his results were in line with Brieland's. He found no significant difference between the speech patterns of blind and sighted children. This thesis is now at New York University.

2. Another New York University study is done by Greenberg who was just employed by Texas Tech., Lubbock, Texas, to teach a course in psychology of blind and other courses which are parts of rehabilitation counselors courses. This is a study of personality development of students in residential schools for the blind, in public school classes and also those who had opportunity to go to college on an integrated or segregated basis. In comparing freshmen and seniors, the study shows the personality development of children of residential to remain about the same during the school year. However, a significant increase was found in the development of those students in public school classes.

3. Mr. Carl Davis is making a study with the purpose of determining the predictability of the braille and talking book editions of the scholastic aptitude test of the college entrance exams. It is possible that Mr. Davis would be able to provide the liaison committee

with data on the graduates. The data on hand contains college transcripts for 121 blind men and women who entered and completed one year of college or junior college and with a few exceptions this group came from New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. From this data an analysis of the major subject area of this group, the distribution of the group in general areas of academic knowledge, the frequency of choice between verbal and nonverbal subjects and the success or failure of the group in the aforementioned categories is to be made.

4. Doug McFarland made a study of how school people have done after graduation. He compared the population of blind workers in industry with sighted workers doing the same job or an equivalent job. The general finding is that the blind workers seem to be as good according to ratings by supervisors in general competence, attendance, and safety as the sighted workers. This survey covered forty pairs of workers in states along the eastern seaboard.

5. The University of Chicago study on blind preschool children is 5-6 years old. The population is just achieving school age, and there is some doubt of future group, but they have an idea of how the children are getting along at school and want to study them further. The outstanding finding so far is that this group of retro. children have been able to develop at the same rate as sighted children in various areas of development. There is a book in press now bringing out the general findings.

6. There is a dissertation at Harvard by Allen Gowman, a blind veteran in the Department of Social Relations. He has done the sighted companion of the blind person in which he asks the question of high school

students, "Who would you marry?" He does some of the best work on surveying attitudes toward blindness and tries to find out which handicap is most devastating. Both of the studies ~~will~~ be coming out in publication within the next year.

Following Dr. Raskin's report on research at the Foundation, a report on research at the Printing House was presented. This report dealt largely with an account of the Library of Congress sponsored Braille Research Program. For the technological phase of this project, Mr. Virgil Zickel, Plant Manager, reported. For the psychological phase of the program, Dr. Ernest Meyers, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Kentucky, reported.

Mr. Zickel described the initiation of the program with cooperation from the Library of Congress. The program deals with investigation of Braille production toward the objectives of improving quality, effecting economy, and standardizing production among cooperating presses.

A six months exploratory program was initiated. During this time, a group of volunteer engineers met to list ideas for technological improvement. At the same time, costs-of-production studies were made at all of the cooperating presses to determine where emphasis should be placed. A selection was then made of projects for further research and development. Four general areas and related projects were selected:

Tape operated stereograph

Objectives: Greater economy through eliminating proof reading.

Better quality by eliminating correcting on metal plates.

Better quality through control of Braille dots to finer tolerances.

Braille Dot Study

Objective: Psychological study to determine optimum characteristics of Braille readability (reported upon in greater detail below by Dr. Meyers).

Study of Paper

Objectives: To determine the best paper for embossing.
To set up standards for economy in purchasing.

Binding

Objectives: To investigate the possibility of improving Braille book binding.
To effect cost reduction.

In view of the technological research program that might result in increased ability to control the factors that lead to readability in braille, it was considered important to study readability characteristics. The Printing House Research Department solicited a large number of universities and colleges, as well as, interested and experienced persons with braille, to determine if they would be interested in participating in a psycho-physical study of braille readability. After lengthy consideration of those expressing interest, it was decided to contract with the Kentucky Research Foundation of the University of Kentucky for cooperative design and study of this problem. Dr. Ernest Meyers has been working with the Printing House on this project. The following report by Dr. Meyers summarizes briefly what has been accomplished thus far.

Considerable preliminary discussion has been necessary to "talk" this problem into a form which will lend itself to scientific investigation. We first set out to list the variables that might contribute to readability. We listed inter-dot, inter-cell, inter-line spacing; brokenness and unbrokenness of dots; dot height; vertical-cross section shape; and horizontal-cross section shape. It then seemed necessary to know how much spacing variables could be varied within cells and lines. When we found considerable latitude available for varying these dimensions it was decided to study the first three variables--inter-dot, inter-cell, and inter-line spacing.

Several preliminary studies have seemed desirable. We were interested to know how well blind readers could discriminate small differences in dot height. For this purpose, we devised stimulus sheets comprised of 412 pairs of dots differing from zero to .015 of an inch in height. 16 subjects were tested and it was found they could discriminate differences as small as .001 of an inch at beyond chance levels of expectancy.

We were also interested to know if it would make any difference whether inter-pointing was done as is now standard practice or whether "full" inter-pointing might be just as appropriate. (Full inter-pointing means that the braille on the back of the page is positioned among all of the dots of the braille on the front rather than just among the dots in the lower half of the cell. Materials were prepared in both manners and no significant differences were evident in studies with 8 subjects.

To study the three variables mentioned above, we are having prepared samples of reading materials sufficient for two fifty minute test periods. Twenty-seven different sets of the same material embossed in all combinations of the three values of three variables are being prepared. One hundred and eight adult and one hundred and eight child readers will be tested for rate and comprehension on these materials to determine if they are significantly related to readability. Depending upon the outcome of this study, further investigation of other variables may be undertaken,

Following this summary of Braille Research Program, participants discussed various aspects of it.

The group then returned to general discussion, using the earlier question regarding administrative versus classroom and classroom-

teacher problems. (See page 9, middle of the page) as a discussion spring board. Some earlier remarks by the representative from West Virginia were referred to.

Additions to List of Items for Research:

Mr. Brannon's experience with braille reading materials shows that books for seeing children have been transcribed into braille with only the pictures deleted. For example, the books say, "See, see" and "Look, look" and for the blind there is nothing to see or to look at. Only a very resourceful teacher can make the stories meaningful without pictures. Actually there is an opportunity to develop a good set of readers, as well as to attempt to discover difficulties in braille reading. There are also all kinds of difficulties in teaching arithmetic. The work that is set up for a year for seeing children cannot be expected to be completed by the blind in a year's time. Due to its age the Stone Number Book was ruled out and it was agreed that there is an urgent need for arithmetic books for grades one and two. The suggestion was made that before going into research in these areas it would be necessary to state the problems, define them, and if possible think in terms of methodology. The common methods of solving arithmetic are mental, or with slate or braille writer. The following questions were asked:

1. Is it more practical to use slate or writer?
2. How much long division should be taught?
3. Does a blind student need the same kind and amount of arithmetic as a seeing student?
4. Does the student need higher math in high school?
5. Should there be a separate course for slow learners who can't get through the eighth or ninth grades? If so, what should it include?

6. If the introduction of some of the processes were delayed would the students catch up?

It was recommended that the primary teachers prepare the materials they use in arithmetic. To blind children, moving to where the number objects are would be much more important than the material of the book and the teacher's own system of teaching would probably be the best. Questions concerning this:

1. How logical would it be to get together creative people who can present ideas that can be given to other teachers?

2. Would it be a research project to find out which method of doing the four fundamental processes is most effective for blind children?

3. Would a guide for teachers be helpful?

Attention was turned to the third grade level. The textbook seems to be too difficult because the students lack previous experience with arithmetic books and visual experience. They appear slower to learn because substitutions must be made for the pictures and supplementary materials must be supplied by the teacher. The amount of material prescribed by the textbook for a year cannot be expected to be covered. One way to do research on this problem would be to identify teachers who are successful in this area and then try their ideas on a larger scale. The differences in teachers, students, their experiences and materials will make this approach difficult. It was suggested that the Buck Time Tests would help to find out what the children do know and at about what levels they know it.

The following brief account of a proposed study of braille reading difficulty was presented: It is proposed that a project be undertaken the purpose of which is to identify and analyze persistent braille reading

errors, and to see what commonality of errors exist in various levels or stages of development in the reading process. The idea is to take three grade levels, for example; the second, fourth and eighth grades, and observe the children in oral reading, recording every error they make. The assumption is that certain errors will arise as a result of transcribing print to braille according to standard usage. Certain things happen to the arrangement of words when we put them into braille. There will arise the potential for reversal and transposition errors. We would like to see what kinds of errors are present in various stages in the reading level and check on mechanics at the same time. We plan first to do a pilot study. After observing and recording errors we expect to analyze (with help from a group like the Uniform Braille Committee) and categorize these errors. A pilot study should point out how many subjects are needed on each level. Each subject will be a bona fide braille subject, that is, his vision should be restricted so that it is impossible for him to read print, large type or braille visually. The individuals should be free of gross speech defects. Each subject should have had braille instruction equivalent to the number of grades preceding his grade placement. We should know an adequate mental age on each subject. Out of the pilot study, it will be necessary to develop a test instrument for the data gathering purpose. If data must be gathered by other people, it will be done in front of a tape recorder and those data could be analysed from the tape itself." A question and an answer period followed to clarify the purpose and suggested procedure to be followed in the project.

This project seems worthwhile to the group, but rather difficult to handle. It is pointed out that the pilot study will be the key to the problem and will tell the group whether it is feasible or not. A

questionnaire has already been used in a limited way to obtain information from some teachers of braille. The group felt that the student's feelings on a particular day would have a great deal to do with how well he read, however, the hope was that by using an appropriate number of subjects such differences would balance out. The suggestion was made that perhaps the home room teacher could get the best reading results with the person doing the study observing and recording the errors.

Discussion then returned to problems that had been listed by conference participants.

The question of priority of the kind of problems that had been discussed arose. The group seemed to agree that all the problems should be worked upon.

In considering the follow-up study the necessity of research into follow-up studies to avoid duplication was felt. The clarification was made that originally the thought was to follow-up students who have been out of school five years who would be able to give information concerning what had helped them, what would have helped them, etc. Perhaps every school should be continually following up its graduates. Experiences with follow-up studies were discussed.

The suggestion was made that a committee be set up to consider further the whole curriculum

The feeling seemed general that the liaison group should meet annually, if possible, immediately following the opening of school. It was considered a good idea to check with the planning committee for the convention to see if a meeting there could be arranged.

Appreciation was expressed to Miss Abel, Dr. Raskin and all of those attending for having come and participated in the meeting.

American Printing House Department of Educational Research

Schools-Liaison Program
October 5th-8th, 1955

The Printing House is undertaking the development of a program for the establishment of closer and more effective liaison between its Department of Educational Research and the schools it serves. To this end school Superintendents have been solicited to appoint a member of their staffs to act as liaison agents. The response has been sufficient to warrant implementation of the proposed program by the scheduling of a meeting of liaison appointees on October 6th, 7th, and 8th.

The following list of persons as consultant and resource help have been invited:

L. M. Dunn, Director Special Education, Peabody College
Nathaniel Raskin, Director of Research Planning, AFB
G. L. Abel, Consultant in Education, AFB
S. P. Hayes, Perkins Institution
Ernest Meyer, University of Kentucky
S. C. Ashcroft, APH Department of Educational Research

The following tentative program and schedule is proposed:

Wednesday evening, October 5th (time to be arranged). Pre-conference planning session to culminate pre-conference planning and coordinate consultant services, Kentucky School (co-host) services, and Printing House Services.

Possible Participants:

L. M. Dunn	P. J. Langan
Nathaniel Raskin	Marjorie Hooper
G. L. Abel	Betty Duncan
S. P. Hayes	L. P. Houser
Ernest Meyer	S. C. Ashcroft
F. E. Davis	

And such conference participants as might arrive early for the conference.

Thursday, October 6th, 10:00 A. M.

Welcomes: Mr. F. E. Davis
Mr. P. J. Langan

Introductions of consultants and participants and remarks:
S. C. Ashcroft

Keynote speaker: L. M. Dunn, Topic to be announced.

12:00 N. Lunch

1:15 P. M. Background and History of Educational Research and Testing for the Blind. Possible panel or informal discussion by S. P. Hayes, N. Raskin, G. L. Abel, S. C. Ashcroft

2:45 P. M. Break

3:00 P. M. Possible Panel Discussion: Research Today

Perkins: S. P. Hayes
APH: N. Raskin
APH: S. C. Ashcroft
The Field for the Blind: G. L. Abel
The Field of Special Education: L. M. Dunn
Psychology and Educational Research: E. Reyer

5:00 P. M. Dinner

7:00 P. M. Distribution and discussion (informal) of proposed projects for consideration as a specific, initial and introductory project for immediate implementation through liaison persons. Participants will be asked to give consideration to these suggested projects so that they may be prepared to make decisions Friday afternoon concerning one of them.

Friday, October 7th, 1955

9:00 A. M. Philosophy and theoretical orientation.
The meaning of educational research in this setting.
The proposal of the liaison program

10:30 A. M. Break

10:45 A. M. Fundamental tools, methodology, and interpretation of research.

12:00 A. M. Lunch

1:30 P. M. Functioning as Liaison Persons.
Plans for a specific project for this year.

Bread follow-up study	Drop-out study
Curriculum study	Travel study
Broad testing program	Arithmetic evaluation
Braille research	Vocational Information Materials
Cumulative records study	Cumulative Records
Resource units Study	Curriculum Study
Audio Aids to Education	Follow-up study
Reading Readiness Materials	

3:00 P. M. Break

3:15 P. M. Continue 1:30 Session and make transition to longer term planning

5:00 P.M.

Dinner

7:00 P.M.

Continue afternoon session if need-be
Socialization and entertainment

Saturday, October 5th, 1955

8:30 A.M.

Tie up loose ends
Summarize
Present Conclusions
Solicit recommendations
Farewells

12:00 N.

Lunch for late leavers.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION AS AN INTRODUCTORY PROJECT

Evaluation of Reading Readiness Materials

There has been an increasing realization of the importance of providing readiness experiences as a background for beginning Braille Reading instruction. Some materials have been prepared by the Printing House. These materials need broad and intensive evaluation in practice. Perhaps there will result suggestions for revision, supplementation, or development of new materials.

Drop-outs in Residential Schools

Do our schools have optimum holding power for the students we serve? Do some tend to drop-out of school before they have achieved in accordance with their capacity to achieve? What are the causes? How could we develop better holding power?

Perhaps a comprehensive study of the causes of drop-outs would help us to be more effective.

Travel Skills--How Can Obstacle Perception Best Be Taught

A good deal of research into the factors that operate in obstacle perception has been done. Developing a course for the effective teaching of obstacle perception and travel skills to children might be a profitable area for research.

Audio Aids To Education

The value of talking book records has been well demonstrated. Supplemental audio-aids should add to the effectiveness of our programs.

One possibility is the use of "Time Compression". It is known to be possible to present material in such a way that 10% to 50% more material per unit of time may be presented using techniques of tape re-cording. Are their implications for research in this area?

Large Scale Follow-up Study of Graduates

How effective are our curricula and practices with respect to our graduates? How would a large sample of our graduates who have been out of school five or more years evaluate their education? What suggestions would they make for changes?

Schools participating in such a study could submit mailing lists to APH. Responses could be handled by individual schools or at the APH. Schools would receive results confidentially, then all results would be collated and distributed without identifying individual schools.

Curriculum Survey

The purpose of this survey would be to make a general and comprehensive examination of curricular practices among various schools.

It has been 15 years since Dr. Quimby studied this problem and published his book, "The Curriculum in Residential Schools for the Blind". Ensuing years have seen tremendous developments, changes, and increased interest in curricular problems. A comprehensive survey of the curriculum would be an important contribution to the education of blind children.

Analysis of Braille Reading Difficulty

This suggested area of research would involve the development of test instruments for the objective identification of children who have Braille reading problems. Also needed are devices for the objective diagnosis of the source of the difficulties which cause problems.

Some work has already been done in this area at the Printing House and it is to be continued. Consideration of this project by this group would expand the effort.

Study of Braille Reading Errors

A multitude of studies have dealt with the mechanics of Braille reading, tactful perception, and methods of teaching Braille. Very little study has been done on the most typical errors that arise at various stages in the acquisition of Braille reading skill.

Study such as suggested here would involve a comprehensive analysis of errors that arise from the Braille system itself.

Cumulative Records

The cumulative record can be a valuable asset for educational and vocational planning and guidance for students. Their value (cumulative records), of course, depends upon the uses to which they are put. Nevertheless, a comprehensive form of cumulative record developed out of research could give a cumulative-record-framework with which schools could develop their own systematic program for keeping and using such records.

Resource Units

"When a teacher of elementary children wishes to undertake units of study, she is handicapped by a dearth of readily available resource materials for children's use. We have considered how a kit of materials might be made available as resource material for the teacher and her students. This by no means implies a prescription or limitation for the development of a unit of work, but only an aid or supplement to assist the teacher in the development of her unit with her children."

Vocational Information Materials.

Material in Braille is scarce to which to refer high school students interested in learning of vocational opportunities. The choice and edition of such materials is a large and difficult problem. How might the Printing House improve its services in this respect?

Arithmetic

Arithmetic computation is one of the achievement test sub-tests that has not been adapted for administration to blind children. The development of such a test or an appropriate adaptation would be very valuable.

Other questions have frequently been raised about meaningful courses of study in arithmetic for blind children. For example, what does the stand operator need the way of arithmetic skills and how best could the school contribute to its development?

